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One-Gun Dulles

We see nothing particularly surprising in the fact that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has a pistol as well as a permit for it. A lot of Americans still exercise the right to bear arms guaranteed by one of the original provisions of the Constitution—and some of our secretaries of State obviously have had reason to.

What will surprise everyone who had assumed that Mr. Dulles's swaddling clothes consisted largely of a pair of striped pants and a homburg, is that he acquired the gun while he was in Central America as a special State Department agent—presumably on a Dangerous Assignment in the Brian Donlevy tradition.

Mr. Dulles is a courageous man who has served the nation ably in many parts of the world, not only as a representative of its State Department, but, in 1917, of the Army. But it is somehow hard to picture him creeping through the lianas, bandoliers crossed, pith helmet cocked and six-gun at the ready. It is even harder to imagine him deep in terse conversation with some banana republic jefe in the back parlors of a smoke-laden cafeteria along a back-country waterfront.

Yet what else are we to believe? The evidence is clear that Mr. Dulles was an armed special agent in the most volatile section of the hemisphere at a time when the world was aflame. Beneath that cutaway there beats the heart of a hero, and while we suspected it all along we are glad to know that his kid brother, Allen, hasn't got a family corner on the cloak and dagger business over in the Central Intelligence Agency.

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